



State of Arizona Blueprint

Child Welfare and Juvenile Justice Systems Integration Initiative

Governor's Office for Children, Youth & Families
Arizona Juvenile Justice Commission
Arizona Department of Economic Security
Arizona Department of Juvenile Corrections
Arizona Department of Health Services
Administrative Office of the Court



State of Arizona Blueprint

Child Welfare and Juvenile Justice Systems Integration Initiative

Mission

The State of Arizona seeks to achieve better coordinated responses to and improved outcomes for youth who are dually involved, or at risk of dual involvement, in the child welfare and juvenile justice systems.

Introduction

Arizona has made protecting and caring for its most vulnerable population, its children, a top priority. Over the past few years, the hard work of the State's child advocates and caseworkers has paid off. In spite of an 11 percent growth in the number of Arizona youth age 8-17 since 2004, the following has been achieved:

- An 11 percent decrease in the number of juveniles referred to the court system between 2004 and 2006
- A 70 percent increase in the number of adoptions since 2002
- A 67 percent increase in the number of children served safely in their own homes since July 2003

Funding that was traditionally only available for services for children in out-of-home care is now available to enable children, when safe, to rejoin their parents through intensive in-home support, wraparound services and connections to community support systems. Arizona can celebrate that more and more of its children have safe environments to live and grow up in and are staying out of trouble.

While progress has been made, there is a population of youth that needs particular attention. A 2002 study of Arizona's dual status youth illustrated that 73% of youth ages 14-17 with an active dependency case had at least one delinquency referral (NCJJ – Arizona Dual Jurisdiction Youth). For many years, the needs of Arizona's dually adjudicated youth were not being met. The systems charged with their care were plagued by a lack of communication that fostered systemic failure. The systems that serve Arizona's dually involved youth were in need of a comprehensive plan to address the diverse needs of this at-risk population.

With leadership from the Office of Governor Janet Napolitano, several public and private agencies have united to address the complexities of Arizona's dually involved youth. In her 2003 plan for Child Protective Services Reform, Governor Napolitano recognized the need to address the link between child welfare and juvenile justice and asked the Arizona Juvenile Justice Commission to address this issue. Soon thereafter, a

collaborative effort between the Departments of Economic Security, Juvenile Corrections, and Health Services as well as the Administrative Office of the Court, the Governor's Office for Children, Youth and Families, and several child advocacy organizations resulted in unprecedented movement on this issue.

The Juvenile Justice Commission advanced its work to promote better integration and coordination across systems by sponsoring a Summit on Child Welfare and Juvenile Justice Systems Integration in the Spring of 2006. Out of this summit, the Child Welfare/Juvenile Justice Integration Initiative was formed. Participants representing all 15 Arizona counties were gathered together to take part in a learning and planning summit to help promote greater integration in the provision of services to children and families in their communities.

County teams were established to develop action steps to better collaborate in their work, integrating child welfare and juvenile justice services. Most importantly, a letter of agreement entitled *Interagency Practice Protocols for Services to Dually-Adjudicated Youth and Their Families* was drafted and signed by each county team. This groundbreaking document, which included the signature of the Chairman of the Committee on Juvenile Courts and signatures of State agency Directors from the Department of Economic Security, the Department of Health Services, and the Department of Juvenile Corrections, demonstrated each agency's commitment to helping at-risk youth in Arizona. The *Interagency Practice Protocols* creates increased communication and cooperation between the agencies who serve dually involved youth. The Juvenile Justice Commission continues to oversee and actively participate in this effort.

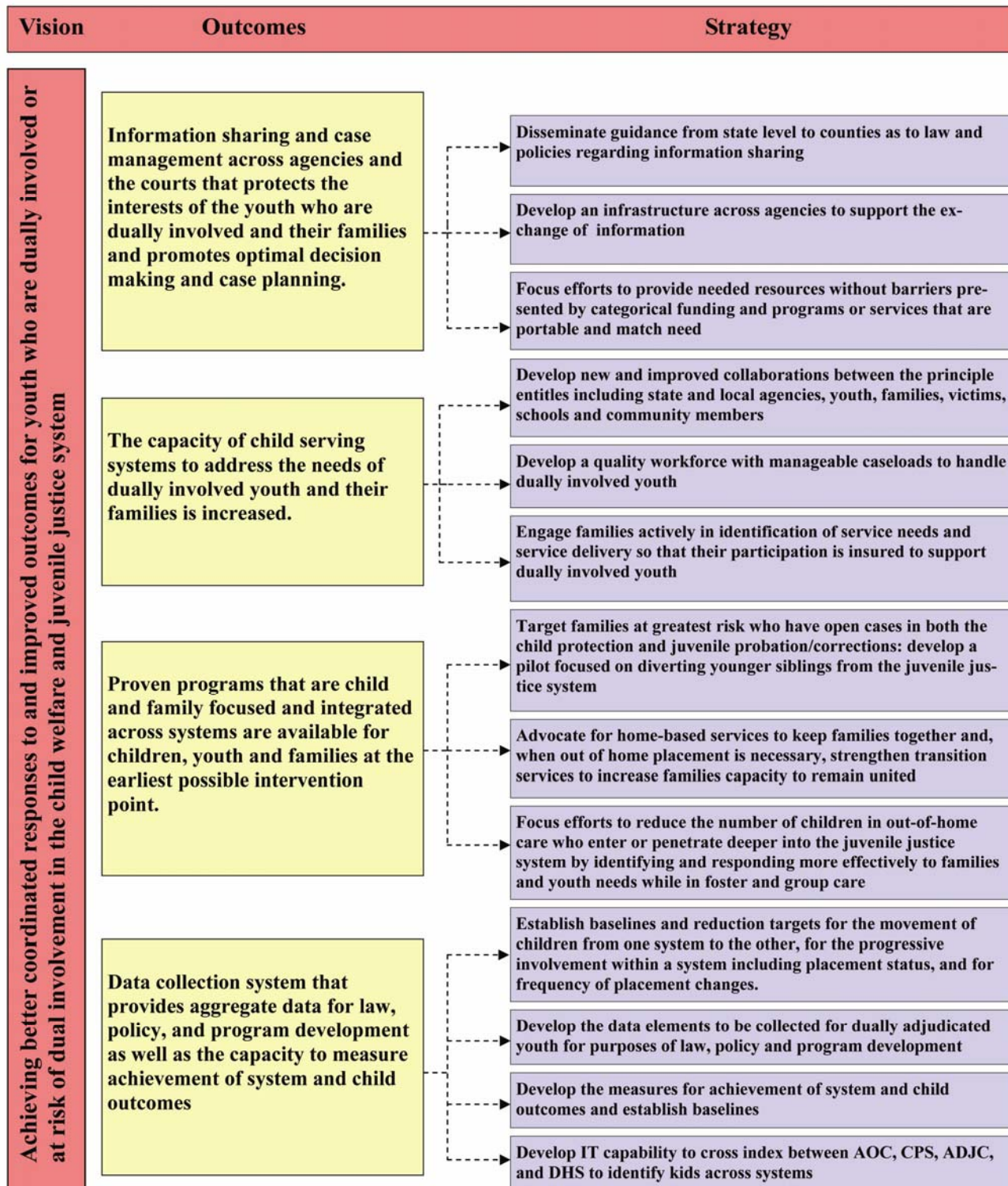
Taking the next step, this document stands as a blueprint for where and how to move forward. It outlines the approaches taken in the past, marks the current status of the work, and presents a plan of action for the future. Representatives of all the involved agencies worked for several months to identify barriers to child welfare-juvenile justice systems integration and coordination and to conceive actions that could be taken to improve Arizona's response to this population. This blueprint identifies needs that can be addressed at the state-level in order to move efforts from policy to practice. This document is a blueprint for achieving better coordinated responses to, and improved outcomes for, youth who are dually involved or at risk of dual involvement in the child welfare and juvenile justice systems.

The State of Arizona has made great strides in improving both the quality of care, and quality of life, for Arizona's most vulnerable youth. However, there is still progress to be made. Through better coordination and integration, an efficient and easy to navigate system can be created that thrives on the collaborative efforts. By working together, Arizona will continue to protect and support the children of Arizona.

This document provides a description of the work currently being done to better integrate and coordinate services and a road map of additional action steps to continue improving our system for better outcomes for youth and families.

Arizona's Blueprint
Governor's Office for Children, Youth and Families

For achieving better coordinated responses to and improved outcomes for youth who are dually involved or at risk of dual involvement in the child welfare and juvenile justice system.



Outcome #1:

Information sharing and case management across agencies and the courts that protects the interests of the youth who are dually involved and their families, and promotes optimal decision making and case planning.

The Information Sharing Subcommittee was established in January, 2007 to address how information can be shared legally and professionally across systems. The Subcommittee members agreed that it is important for staff to be able to understand what is considered 'protected information; to share information as permitted by law, court order or informed consent; and to access particular items of information for purposes of improving case planning and decision making for dually involved youth. An infrastructure to exchange information across agencies is the goal.

The Information Subcommittee is made-up of staff from the Governor's Office for Children, Youth and Families (GOCYF), Department of Juvenile Corrections (ADJC), Department of Economic Security/Division of Children, Youth and Families (CPS), Department of Health Services (DHS), Attorneys General Office (AG's), and the Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC).

Strategies for achieving Outcome #1 include:

Strategy 1.1 – Disseminate guidance from state level to counties as to law and policies regarding information sharing.

Progress to Date

Under the leadership of the Child Welfare League of America, the Field Guide Workgroup was convened in August 2007. The goal of the Workgroup is to develop a Guide that will assist staff in understanding the types of information that can be shared across agencies relating to youth that are dually involved with the child welfare and juvenile justice systems.

The Workgroup agreed that the intended goals for the Field Guide are to:

- ❖ Provide statutory and policy guidelines (requires analysis of statutes, rules and policy).
- ❖ Provide information about services, access points, and information that will improve case planning.
- ❖ Reduce duplication of services.
- ❖ Clearly articulate the need for information in the provision of services while maintaining the right to privacy.

- ❖ Identify gaps in obtaining consent for information not otherwise accessible.
- ❖ Provide an avenue to gather information that is not currently accessible.

The Field Guide will be made available to:

- ❖ Caseworkers/Probation Officers (CPS, Probation and Parole)
- ❖ Schools (Administrators, Teachers, Social Workers, School Psychologist, Nurses)
- ❖ Judges
- ❖ County Attorneys
- ❖ Assistant Attorneys General
- ❖ Child and family team members
- ❖ Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASAs)
- ❖ Foster Care Review Board volunteers

In December 2007, Assistant Attorneys General representing CPS, DHS, and the Department of Education, as well as attorneys representing the Administrative Office of the Courts completed an inventory and analysis of Arizona Statutes and Rules and Federal Regulations relating to information sharing and confidentiality. The information from this process was compiled and is the foundation for the Field Guide.

Action Steps

1. Disseminate Field Guide to pilot units in CPS, Juvenile Probation and Department of Juvenile Corrections for recommendations/suggestions to include in final draft.
2. Produce and disseminate Field Guide to all identified users.
3. Provide training to identified users of the Field Guide on the dually adjudicated protocols, integration efforts, and confidentiality.

Strategy 1.2 – Develop an infrastructure across agencies to support the exchange of information.

Progress to Date

To facilitate better communication across state child caring agencies (CPS, ADJC, DHS and AOC), each agency was asked to identify a position that will function as the “information officer.” The information officer’s responsibilities will include:

- Responding to calls from staff in state and county government agencies.
- Providing data which may include the name and contact information for case managers, probation officers, staff and involved family members, and the current residence of the youth.
- Providing an identification number to be utilized for accessing automated information for youth in each of the systems.

Action Steps

1. Identify Information Officers in each of the County Probation Offices and the Department of Health Services.
2. Provide training to Information Officers regarding types of information to share in response to potential inquiries.
3. Provide training to staff on the existence, purpose and contact information of the Information Officer.
4. Collect and review data on utilization levels, types of calls received and resolution reached.

Strategy 1.3 – Focus efforts to provide needed resources without barriers presented by categorical funding; develop programs or services that are portable and match need.

Progress to Date

To address resource delivery at the local level, regular meetings are held to collaborate with the county Juvenile Court, CPS District Program Management, county Juvenile Probation, and the RBHA. The GOCYF will provide technical assistance as requested.

The Deputy Directors of Arizona's Department of Economic Security/Division of Children, Youth and Families, Department of Health Services/Behavioral Health, Department of Juvenile Corrections, and the Administrative Office of the Courts meet on a monthly basis to discuss cross system issues.

Action Steps:

1. Meet with the Deputy Directors to present the integration initiative.
2. Formalize and institutionalize discussions at the Deputy Director's monthly meetings relating to sharing of services/resources.
3. Highlight accomplishments relating to this strategy at the Children's Cabinet.

Outcome #2:

The capability of child-serving systems to address the needs of dually involved youth and their families is increased.

A subcommittee on Children in Out of Home Care was established in July, 2007. The mission of this group is to address issues that lead to multiple moves from one place to another and negative outcomes for youth in foster care and congregate care settings. Membership on this committee includes staff from the Governor's Office for Children, Youth and Families (GOCYF), Department of Juvenile Corrections (ADJC), Department of Economic Security/Division of Children, Youth and Families (CPS), Department of Health Services (DHS), the Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC), community-based agencies and advocacy groups.

Strategies for achieving Outcome #2 include:

Strategy 2.1: Develop new and improved collaborations between the principle entities including state and local agencies, youth, families, victims, schools and community members.

Progress to Date

In January, 2007 the Directors of the Department of Economic Security, the Department of Health, the Department of Juvenile Corrections and the Chair of the Commission on Juvenile Courts signed the Letter of Agreement Supporting Dually Adjudicated Youth and their Families in Arizona. This historic document and the accompanying Framework for Interagency Practice Protocol, currently available at http://gocyf.az.gov/Children/SP_PSDAY.asp, was created by an interagency committee of individuals in diverse positions and provides a road map for integrating and coordinating across systems of care in order to create a seamless continuum of services for youth and families involved with multiple agencies.

Concurrent to the creation of the Interagency Agreement, the Juvenile Justice Commission and the Governor's Division for Children held the Child Welfare/Juvenile Justice Integration Summit in May, 2006. At this event, teams of individuals from each County and a team of state level individuals met to learn about the Child Welfare League of America's Framework for Integration and Coordination and to work together as teams to begin identifying challenges and opportunities in their communities and developing plans to strengthen their response to this population.

Ten of the fifteen counties have continued to meet to develop improved responses to children, youth and families with multiple needs in their community. In November 2007, the Division for Children, with funding allocated by the Juvenile Justice Commission, solicited applications for local teams to conduct 'mini-summits' to address priority issues in their communities. Six local team plans were approved.

Action Steps

- 1) Provide training on the ***Letter of Agreement Supporting Dually Adjudicated Youth and Their Families in Arizona*** and the accompanying ***Framework for Interagency Practice Protocol***. Steps include:
 - a. Develop training module utilizing both in-person and media based formats on the philosophy and expectations delineated in the Letter of Agreement and accompanying protocols.
 - b. Provide in-person training to direct service and supervisory staff from CPS, Juvenile Court, Probation, Juvenile Corrections, RBHAs and community based service providers in every Arizona County.
 - c. Provide CD-Rom's of training to Juvenile Court, CPS, Probation, Parole, RBHA offices and Community Providers across Arizona.
- 2) Six local summits were held by July 1, 2008. Five of the local summits (Maricopa, Mohave, Navajo, Yavapai, and Yuma) plans called for addressing educational issues relating to children/youth in the child welfare-juvenile justice systems. One County (Cochise County) plan was to provide three-hour mini summits. The mini summits were offered throughout Cochise County to provide regionally relevant cross systems training to children and family members, local school staff and administrators, child and family service providers, juvenile justice system staff, Child Protective Services staff, and community members (including faith based organizations), and families and youth councils.
- 3) Utilize the Key Decision Points Matrix to identify and maximize existing collaboration and identify opportunities for additional collaborative approaches.

Strategy 2.2: Develop a quality workforce with manageable caseloads to handle dually involved youth.

Progress to Date

Governor Napolitano's 2003 Plan for improving Child Protective Services included recommendations for strengthening the ability of both CPS Case Managers and related professionals to meet the needs of children involved in the child welfare system through aggressive recruitment, training, support and retention strategies. Since that time, the Governor has consistently requested and obtained additional funding to increase the number of Child Protective Service Case Managers to better comply with national caseload standards. She has also worked consistently to increase the salaries of state workers to better compete with private industry.

Action Steps

- 1) Support appropriation requests for additional Case Managers for CPS to comply with caseload standards.
- 2) Advocate for retention of current levels of juvenile probation officers.
- 3) Develop and provide joint training on adolescent development and positive youth development for group home contractors, child welfare workers, foster parents, mental health workers, and probation and parole staff.

Strategy 2.3: Engage families actively in the identification of service needs and service delivery so that their participation is insured to support dually involved youth.

Progress to Date

Family representatives participated in the Child Welfare/Juvenile Justice Integration Summit held in 2006 and have actively participated on the Executive Committee and Subcommittees in the development of the Blueprint. Family representatives have also participated on subcommittees that are planning and implementing system changes. In addition, many of the local teams are including family members on their planning groups.

Child and Family Teams are cited as the preferred model in the Framework for Interagency Practice Protocol and the operation of a team patterned on this model is set out as an expectation to address dually involved youth who are not in the Behavioral Health system.

Action Steps:

- 1) Support the continued development of Child and Family Teams with emphasis on improving the quality and consistency of team leadership and team management.
- 2) Support the adoption of Best Practice Programs that include family involvement and participation.
- 3) Contract with statewide agencies supporting family and youth involvement to train and support family members in their participation in policy making across systems.

Outcome #3:

Proven programs that are child and family focused and integrated across systems are available for children, youth and families at the earliest possible intervention point.

Much has been accomplished already in Arizona to ensure that programs serving dually adjudicated youth

are evidence-based and are evaluated to assure positive outcomes. The Governor's Office for Children, Youth and Families has provided leadership in this effort. All programs funded through GOCYF have, at a minimum, an internal evaluation. Many funded programs, including all Parent's Commission funded programs, all Safe and Drug Free School Programs, and programs within the Division for Substance Abuse Policy, require an independent evaluation.

Many state and local agencies are also implementing evidence-based practices. For example, the Administrative Office of the Courts is implementing the Standardized Program Evaluation Protocol (SPEP) process which requires all funded programs to be in alignment with proven practice. It also requires that there is tracking as to adherence and outcomes from this practice. Pima County Juvenile Court is a leader on a state and national level in use of data to identify program needs, implementing programs intended to respond to the needs and utilizing data to assessing program effectiveness in addressing identified needs.

Action Steps:

The Out of Home Care Committee is taking the following steps to further improve service delivery and effectiveness.

- 1) Encourage adoption of evidence based programs and practice based evidence.
- 2) Require outcome reporting for all sub-grantees.
- 3) Develop standards for the utilization of outcome data in program monitoring and in decision making regarding continued funding of programs.

Additional strategies for achieving Outcome #3 include:

Strategy 3.1 – Target families at greatest risk who have open cases in both the child protection and juvenile probation/corrections: develop a pilot focused on diverting younger siblings from the juvenile justice system.

Action Steps:

- 1) Research effective programs & select/develop program model(s).
- 2) Identify funding source.
- 3) Define target group.
- 4) Identify protocols and procedures for recruiting participants with special attention to avoid labeling a sibling based on the other sibling's behavior.

- 5) Solicit partner jurisdictions.
- 6) Select treatment provider through competitive process.

Strategy 3.2 – Advocate for home-based services to keep families together and, when out of home placement is necessary, strengthen transition services to increase families’ capacity to remain united.

Progress to Date

The Arizona Vision for children’s behavioral health in Arizona sets forth 12 principles that emphasize the importance of family involvement and serving youth within the family whenever possible. The Division for Behavioral Health in partnership with other child serving agencies has moved forward to expand the community’s capacity to provide home-based services. In addition to continuing current efforts, other steps should be taken to improve transition services for youth in out of home settings, both treatment settings and incarceration. Further work is also needed to institutionalize family involvement at the policy level as well as at the individual case level.

Action Steps

- 1) Support the ongoing efforts of child welfare, juvenile justice and behavioral health entities in Arizona to provide home-based services whenever possible.
- 2) Advocate for the incorporation of transition services into the contract expectations for residential service providers including requiring and compensating for services prior to and after discharge from the residential facility.

Strategy 3.3 – Focus efforts to reduce the number of children in out-of-home care who enter or penetrate deeper into the juvenile justice system by identifying and responding more effectively to families and youth needs while in foster and group care.

Progress to Date:

A series of surveys has been drafted in consultation with the Young Adult Program Advisory Group to solicit feedback from youth placed in congregate care settings as well as personnel working in out-of-home care programs.

Action Steps:

- 1) Develop, pilot test, and institutionalize a survey instrument to solicit information from youth in out of home care, their caregivers and service provider administrators regarding the strengths and challenges of out-of-home care providers in meeting the needs of youth in their care. Develop a

process for regular analysis of survey results to inform the development of training and other interventions to strengthen out of home care providers' ability to promote positive development of youth and prevent disruption of youth from their placement.

- 2) Develop and provide joint training on adolescent development and positive youth development for group home contractors, child welfare workers, foster parents, mental health workers, and probation and parole staff.

Strategy 3.4 Examine and modify policies and practices for licensing and contracts offices to promote a positive experience and positive outcomes for youth in placement.

Progress to Date:

In 2006, the Governor's Office convened a group of community providers and Department of Economic Security Staff responsible for licensing group homes to address a recently policy change at the Office of Licensure that excluded transitional living facilities for teens preparing to transition from care from licensing. Based on the input of this group, a set of emergency rules was developed that addressed the developmental needs of this population to learn skills of independence and required an appropriate level of supervision by the program to protect youth safety.

In spring, 2008 the contracts of agencies operating Group Homes for youth in the custody of Child Protective Services were amended to require that all staff receive training on Positive Youth Development.

Action Steps:

- 1) Review and modify emergency rules based on past two years of experience with implementation.
- 2) Assure rules are adopted into an ongoing regulations.
- 3) Review contract language and recommend updates based on current research regarding child and adolescent development.

Outcome # 4:

Data collection system that provides aggregate data for law, policy, and program development as well as the capacity to measure achievement of system and child outcomes.

In January 2007, the Child Welfare – Juvenile Justice Integration State Team proposed that a Data Subcommittee be convened to address strategies and actions for data elements that pertain to dually adjudicated youth. The members of the Data Subcommittee represent data/policy staff from the Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC); Arizona Department of Juvenile Corrections (ADJC); Arizona

Department of Economic Security/Division of Children, Youth and Families (CPS); and the Arizona Department of Health Services (DHS).

Strategies for achieving Outcome #4 include:

Strategy 4.1 – Develop the data elements to be collected for dually adjudicated youth for purposes of law, policy and program development.

Progress to Date

Developing data elements and gathering accurate data will assist with improving laws and policies and creating programs that better meet the needs of youth and families. As noted in the Arizona Dual Jurisdiction Study, Arizona youth who have contact with Child Protective Services are at significantly higher risk of serious problems (including chronic offending, violence, academic failure, substance abuse, teen parenthood, etc) than their peers in the general population.

After struggling with definitions as to what constitutes “dually involved,” the subcommittee decided to focus their efforts on developing data elements on two populations. The first priority is dually adjudicated youth and secondarily, youth with dual dependency and delinquency court involvement. The definition of court involvement will be consistent with that used in the Arizona Dual Jurisdiction Study completed by Gene Siegel of the National Center for Juvenile Justice in 2004.

It was decided that the child welfare – juvenile justice cases may be cross referenced using the JD number that is indicated on legal documents (court orders). The Attorney General’s Office has matched the child welfare cases

Action Steps

- 1) Select measures to use from the Arizona Dual Jurisdiction Study. The subcommittee may want to consider measures other than “Committed to ADJC” as indicated in Table 1.
- 2) Match the child welfare and juvenile probation cases using the JD numbers referenced in court documents.
- 3) Work to collect the data.

Table 1: Level of Court Involvement of Dual Jurisdiction Youth

	2002*	2008	2010
Committed to ADJC	3%		
Detained	22%		
In a Probation Placement	10%		
On Probation	28%		
Delinquency petition disposed during fiscal year	29%		
Informal court involvement only **	8%		
Total	100% (n= 3,689)		

*Source: National Center for Juvenile Justice, (November 2004), Arizona Dual Jurisdiction Study Final Report, pg. 13

**on a diverted or dismissed delinquency referral

Table 2: Dual jurisdiction youth recidivism rates

	2002*	2008	2010
Delinquency referral	74%		
Status offense referral	36%		
Probation violation referral	72%		
Any type of referral	92%		

*Source: National Center for Juvenile Justice, (November 2004), Arizona Dual Jurisdiction Study Final Report, pg. 51

Strategy 4.2 – Establish baselines and reduction targets for the movement of children from one system to the other; for the progressive involvement within a system including placement status; and, for frequency of placement changes.

Progress to Date

In order to provide appropriate services to families and youth who are dually adjudicated it is important to be able to collect accurate data about the youth and to establish a baseline to evaluate the youth's progress. The subcommittee agreed to utilize baseline information available from the Arizona Dual Jurisdiction Study and to develop targets for improvement in 2008 and 2010. The above tables (Tables 1 and 2) indicate the baselines.

Action Steps

- 1) Decide targets for 2008.
- 2) Collect and analyze the data in 2008 and 2010.
- 3) Validate results.

Strategy 4.4 – Develop IT capability to cross index between AOC, CPS, ADJC and DHS to identify youth across systems.

Progress to Date

The subcommittee discussed the value in giving the AOC, CPS, ADJC, and DHS staff the ability to cross index systems which would establish a means for identifying family involvement with agencies, services that are or have been provided, and persons associated with each case. The goal is to be able to identify youth who penetrate deeper into the child welfare and juvenile justice systems.

Action Steps

Please reference the **Action Steps** in **Strategy 1.2**.

Conclusion

This Blueprint for Child Welfare and Juvenile Justice integration provides an account of progress made in regard to dually involved youth in Arizona, describes current efforts, and provides guidance as to where efforts must be focused in order to continue progress to address this most vulnerable population. It will serve Arizona well to make these youth a priority and to make a commitment to improve the systems that handle them so that they do not unnecessarily penetrate further into these systems.